

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 04449 131731Z
ACTION SS-25

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INFO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 04449

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, XF, UR, US, PLO
SUBJECT: KORNIYENKO ON MIDDLE EAST

1. DURING MY MARCH 13 CALL ON KORNIYENKO TO DISCUSS
CURRENT SOVIET INTENTIONS IN THE HORN OF AFRICA (SEPTTEL),
I DEPLORED THE MARCH 11 AL FATAH RAID OUTSIDE TEL AVIV
AND SAID THAT I ASSUMED THAT LIKE OTHER CIVILIZED GOVERN-
MENTS, THE USSR WOULD CONDEMN THIS DESPICABLE TERRORIST
ACT.

2. KORNIYENKO REPLIED:
-- THE SOVIET NEGATIVE ATTITUDE TO TERRORISM IS WELL KNOWN
AND NEEDS NO REPETITION.
-- HOWEVER IN THIS SITUATION THERE ARISES THE QUESTION OF
WHETHER OR NOT THE RAID CONSTITUTES TERRORISM. THE
SOVIETS DO NOT HAVE ENOUGH INFORMATION TO MAKE SUCH A
DETERMINATION. EVEN THE WESTERN PRESS NOTES HOW HARD IT
IS TO GET ADEQUATE DETAILS THROUGH SEVERE ISRAELI CENSOR-
SHIP.
-- WHAT CAN BE SAID IS THAT THE INCIDENT IS UNDOUBTEDLY
THE RESULT OF THE ILL WILL AMONG PALESTINIANS ENGENDERED
BY ISRAELI AGGRESSION AND THE LACK OF A MIDDLE EAST SETTLE
MENT.

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-- IN THIS CONNECTION THE "TREACHEROUS" LINE OF SADAT
DOES NOT HELP EITHER THE PALESTINIANS OR A ME SETTLEMENT.
3. AT THIS POINT THE NEW HEAD OF THE USA DIVISION,
KOMPLEKTOV, CHIPPED IN WITH THE "PERSONAL" OBSERVATION
THAT THE CURRENT ISRAELI STANCE ON THE WEST BANK AND GAZA
ISSUES HAD PROBABLY STIMULATED THE RAID. KORNIYENKO
AGREED AND NOTED THAT BEGIN HAD THE AUDACITY TO DESCRIBE

THESE AS LIBERATED RATHER THAN OCCUPIED TERRITORIES.

4. I RESPONDED BY STATING THAT NO STATEMENT BY BEGIN AND NO ACTIVITIES OF THE ISRAELIS COULD EXCUSE SUCH AN ACT BY TERRORISTS -- OR "PARTISANS" AS TODAY'S PRAVDA HAD DESCRIBED THEM. WE FELT STRONGLY THAT UNLESS THE SOVIETS AS GENEVA CONFERENCE CO-CHAIRMEN CONDEMN SUCH ACTS THEY WOULD CONTINUE AND THE SITUATION WOULD WORSEN.

5. KORNIYENKO SARCASTICALLY REMARKED THAT IT WAS INTERESTING TO HEAR ME REFER TO THE USSR AS CO-CHAIRMEN IN LIGHT OF THE FACT THAT AFTER THE OCTOBER 1 JOINT STATEMENT THE U.S. HAD NOT ACTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH ITS RESPONSIBILITIES. WHEN I INSISTED THAT WE HAD DONE NOTHING INCONSISTENT WITH THE JOINT STATEMENT KORNIYENKO REMARKED THAT UNFORTUNATELY THE SOVIETS HAD A DIFFERENT UNDERSTANDING OF THE ISSUE.

6. DEPARTMENT REPEAT AS DESIRED. TOON

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